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22 August 1960

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN



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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN

22 August 1960

DAILY BRIEF

II. ASIA-AFRICA

Mali Federation: Senegalese authorities appear to be exercising complete control in Dakar, following their proclamation of secession from the Mali Federation of Senegal and Soudan on 20 August. [Trouble may break out, however, in rural areas of Senegal where there are Soudanese residents. The attitude in the Soudanese capital of Bamako is reported bitter, and a strong

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reaction may be forthcoming from the repatriation of Soudanese officials of the Mali Government--including Modibo Keita, the president of the Mali Council of Ministers and Soudanese premier.

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[redacted] French officials are striving to maintain a public position of neutrality in this issue concerning a French Community republic. De Gaulle has proposed talks in Paris, and the Senegalese premier has announced his acceptance. [redacted]

*Laos: Souvanna Phouma apparently is moving to meet at least some of General Phoumi's preconditions for negotiations. He has reinstated General Ouane as armed forces commander and has placed him in charge of security in Vientiane, with Captain Kong Le serving as Ouane's "temporary deputy." Ouane's freedom of action under such an arrangement is questionable.

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[redacted] Kong Le's paratroopers are withdrawing from the city and are being replaced by civil and military police and possibly regular army elements as well. Souvanna claims that either he or Ouane will meet Phoumi in Savannakhet as soon as the "arrangements" now in process in Vientiane are completed. Meanwhile, Phoumi continues to apply pressure on the Vientiane regime by moving up his troops, although the location of his units is the subject of conflicting reports. He may interpret Souvanna's conciliatory gestures as a sign of weakness and hence raise his price for a settlement. [redacted]

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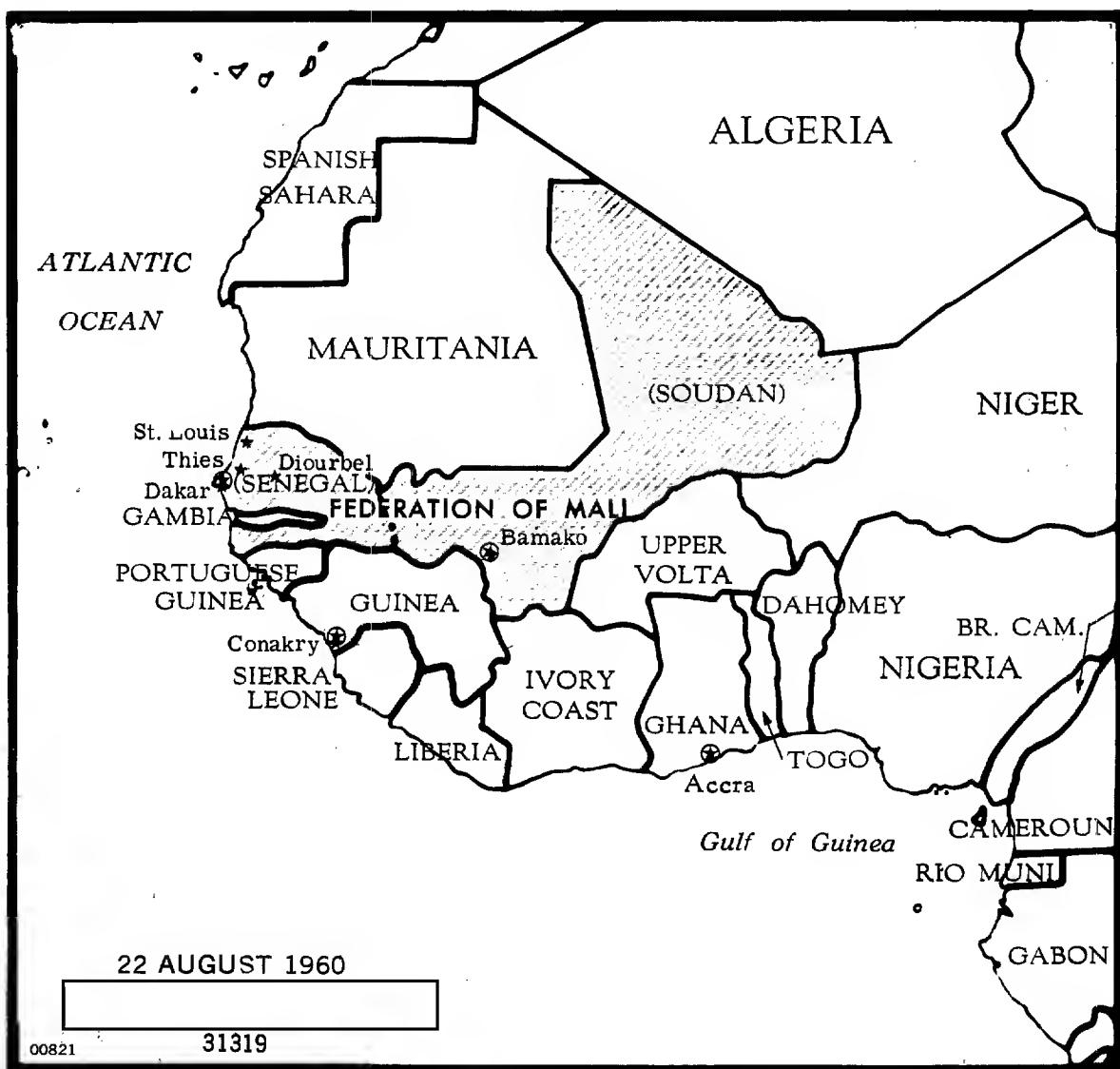
Mali Situation

Senegalese authorities appear to be in complete control of Mali's capital city of Dakar--which is also Senegal's capital-- following the announcement on 20 August that Senegal had seceded from the Mali Federation. They have had the Soudanese officials of the Mali Government--including Modibo Keita, who is president of the Mali Council of Ministers and Soudanese premier-- under house arrest but have now expatriated them by train to the Soudanese capital of Bamako. Soudanese officials are bitter about Senegal's actions, but any countermeasures will probably be delayed until after Soudan's leaders arrive in Bamako late today.

Trouble may break out in some rural areas of Senegal where there are Soudanese residents, but in view of the reported unity among top Senegalese leaders, local authorities should be able to contain any disturbances. The Soudanese leaders, realizing that Senegal might secede, reportedly alerted Soudanese residents outside Dakar and contacted opponents of Senegal's leadership for possible political action in St. Louis, Thies, and Diourbel. Apparently the Soudanese had expected to use Mali troops and security forces to prevent secession, but 600 of Mali's best troops are in the Congo with the UN force, and the French command of the 7,000 Community troops in the Dakar area would hesitate to intervene in an internal Mali problem.

(Although a crisis has been developing between Senegal and Soudan over allocation of top administrative posts--Soudan has gone back on a promise to support Senegalese leader Leopold Senghor in his bid for Mali President on 27 August-

Keita's declaration on 19 August of a state of emergency and his



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order to the Mali chief of staff to alert his troops convinced
Senegal's leaders that Keita was planning a coup.

French officials are striving to maintain a public position of neutrality. In response to appeals by both Senegalese and Soudanese leaders, De Gaulle, as president of the French Community, stated that France would not take sides, since the crisis was an internal Mali affair. He suggested that the leaders should come to Paris to discuss with him a rapprochement between the two states or their intended relations with France and the Community. There are extensive agreements between France and Mali covering cooperation in defense, finance, and foreign affairs. Senegalese Premier Mamadou Dia has indicated his desire to attend; Soudanese officials have not been in a position to reply.

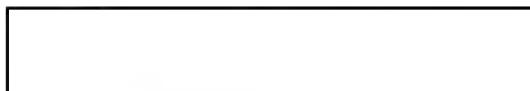
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Situation in Laos:

From their respective headquarters at Vientiane and Savannakhet, Souvanna Phouma and General Phoumi continue to seek a basis for negotiations. After rejecting Souvanna's first delegation on 19 August as not having proper authority, Phoumi sent a message insisting that Souvanna dispatch a competent emissary to Savannakhet, that Captain Kong Le return to his pre-coup duties, that the second parachute battalion withdraw to its base about ten miles from Vientiane, and that General Ouane ensure the security of the capital.

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Souvanna is meeting at least part of Phoumi's demands. General Ouane has been reinstated as armed forces commander and is now ostensibly in charge of the security of Vientiane, with Kong Le serving as "temporary deputy"--an arrangement which casts doubt on Ouane's freedom of action. Kong Le's paratroopers, who had been maintaining security in Vientiane, now appear to be withdrawing--although it is not clear to where--and are being replaced by civil and military police and possibly also by regular army troops.

Souvanna informed Ambassador Brown on 21 August that the situation was in the hands of the military and that the "issues were being resolved." He added that either he or Ouane will meet Phoumi in Savannakhet after the arrangements in process--presumably the transfer of control of Vientiane from the paratroopers to other elements--are completed. Souvanna said he believed these arrangements would soon be complete. Souvanna, who has tended to be overly optimistic in the past, may well be so in this case also, particularly in his apparent confidence that Kong Le will quietly take a back seat to Ouane.



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Phoumi, meanwhile, continues to maintain pressure on his opponents in Vientiane through psychological warfare methods and by moving his troops toward Vientiane. The exact location of the units involved is the subject of contradictory reports; there are indications that certain units have not advanced as far as previously reported. In any event, it will be at least several days before the bulk of Phoumi's forces could be in position around the capital. While he would probably prefer a bloodless solution to the crisis, Phoumi may interpret Souvanna's conciliatory gestures as a sign of weakness and thus be emboldened to raise his price for a settlement--possibly even asking for a return to the status quo ante the Kong Le coup. Any such demand would probably end all prospects for a negotiated settlement.

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